



STATE OF MARYLAND

DMMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
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Office of Preparedness & Response

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Public Health & Emergency Preparedness Bulletin: # 2007:42 **Reporting for the week ending 10/20/07 (MMWR Week #42)**

CURRENT HOMELAND SECURITY THREAT LEVELS

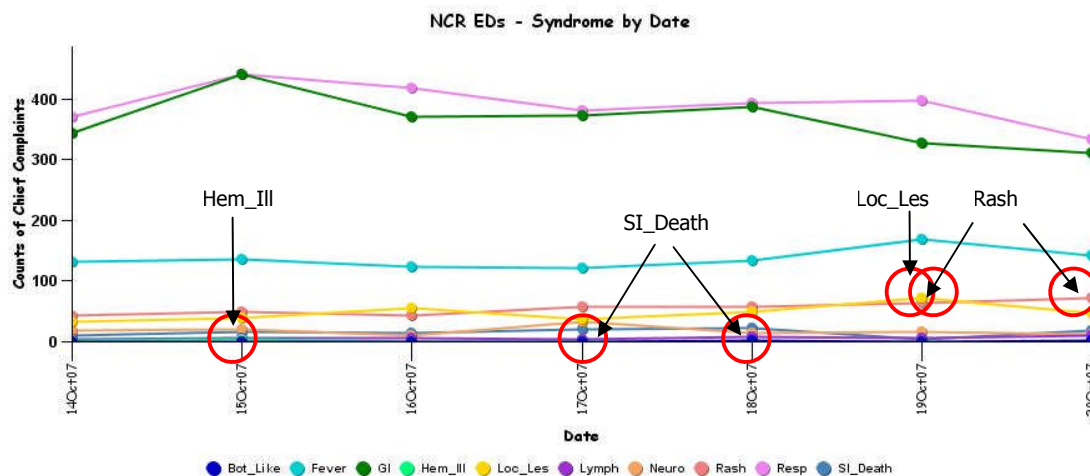
National: Yellow (ELEVATED) *The threat level in the airline sector is Orange (HIGH)
Maryland: Yellow (ELEVATED)

SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE REPORTS

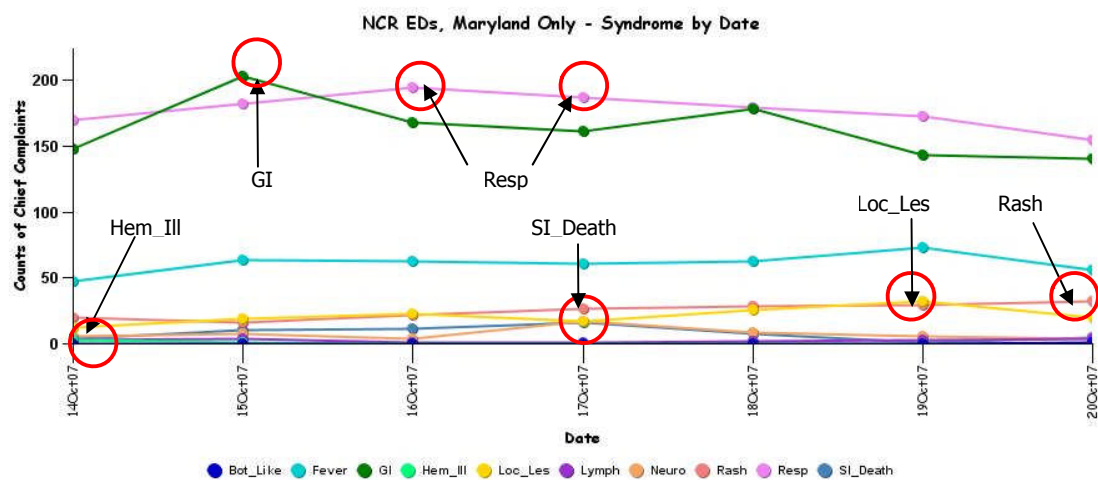
ESSENCE (Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics):

Graphical representation is provided for all syndromes, excluding the "Other" category, all age groups, and red alerts only. Note: ESSENCE – ANCR Spring 2006 (v 1.3) now uses syndrome categories consistent with CDC definitions.

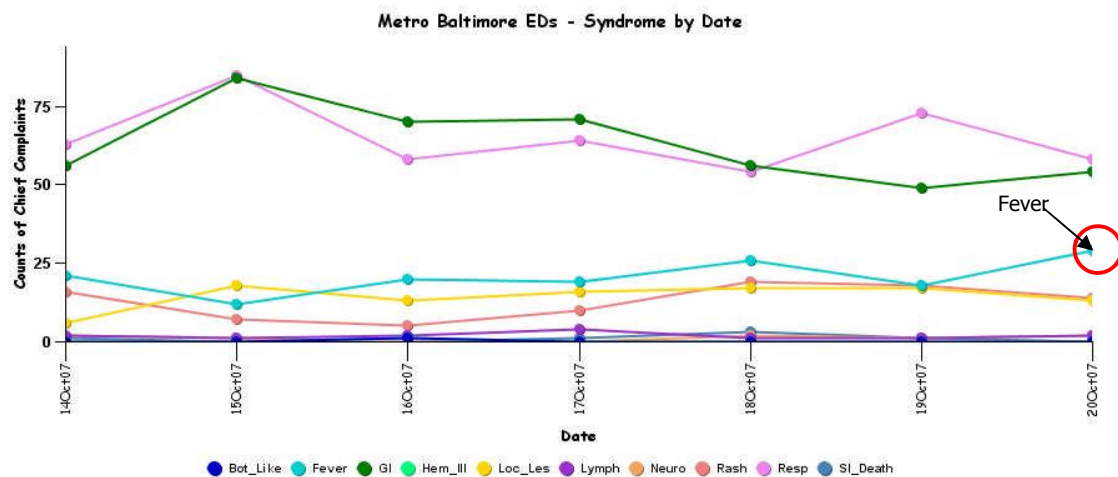
Overall, no suspicious patterns of illness were identified. Track backs to the health care facilities yielded no suspicious patterns of illness.



* Includes EDs in all jurisdictions in the NCR (MD, VA, DC) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system

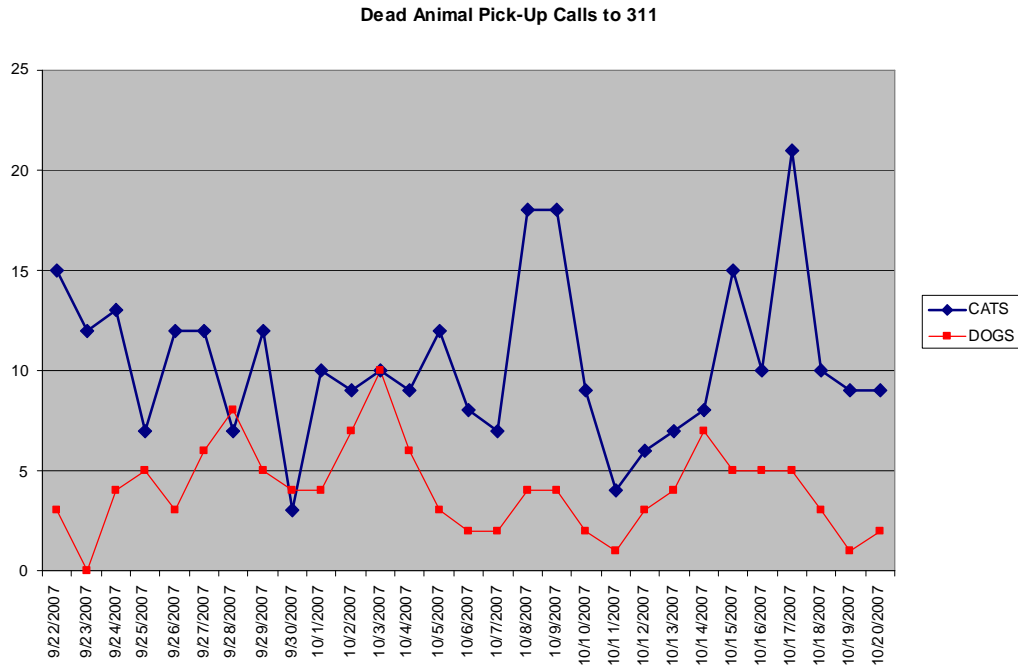


* Includes only Maryland EDs in the NCR (Prince George's and Montgomery Counties) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system



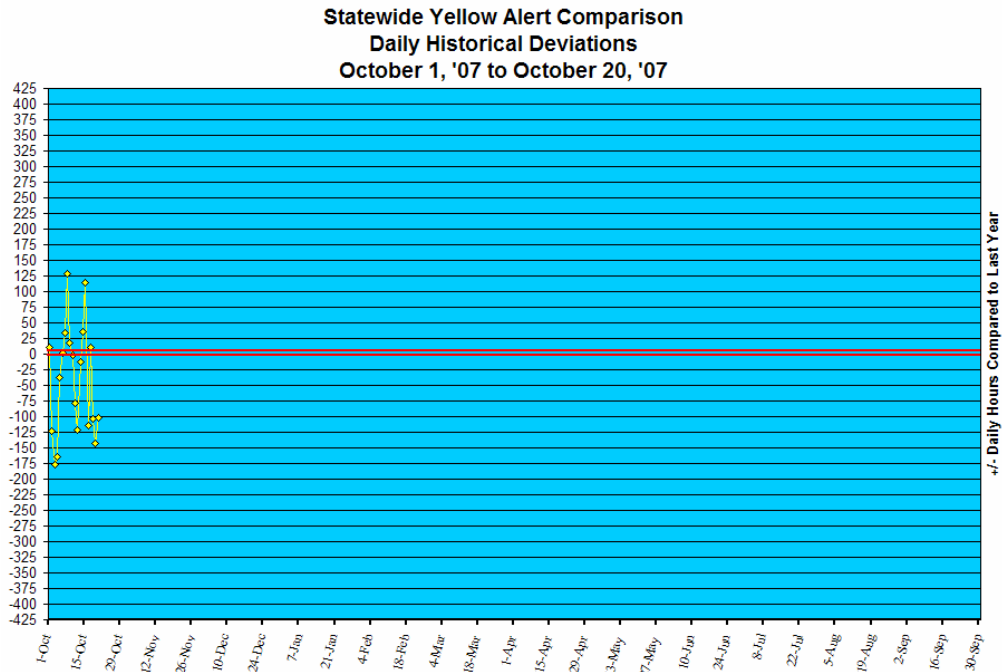
* Includes EDs in the Metro Baltimore region (Baltimore City and Baltimore County) under surveillance in the ESSENCE system.

BALTIMORE CITY SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE PROJECT: No suspicious patterns in the medic calls, ED Syndromic Surveillance and the animal carcass surveillance. Graphical representation is provided for animal carcass surveillance 311 data.



REVIEW OF EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT UTILIZATION

YELLOW ALERT TIMES (ED DIVERSION): The reporting period begins 10/01/06.



REVIEW OF MORTALITY REPORTS

OCME: OCME reports no suspicious deaths related to BT for the week.

MARYLAND TOXIDROMIC SURVEILLANCE

Poison Control Surveillance Monthly Update: Investigations of the outliers and alerts observed by the Maryland Poison Center and National Capital Poison Center in September 2007 did not identify any cases of possible terrorism events.

REVIEW OF MARYLAND DISEASE SURVEILLANCE FINDINGS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE CASE REPORTS (confirmed, probable and suspect):

Meningitis:	<u>Aseptic</u>	<u>Meningococcal</u>
New cases:	16	0
Prior week:	16	0
Week#42, 2006:	24	0

OUTBREAKS: 3 outbreaks were reported to DHMH during MMWR Week 42 (Oct. 14- Oct. 20, 2007):

1 Gastroenteritis outbreak

1 outbreak of GASTROENTERITIS associated with an Assisted Living Facility

1 Foodborne gastroenteritis outbreak

1 outbreak of FOODBORNE GASTROENTERITIS associated with a Gathering

1 Respiratory illness outbreak

1 outbreak of PNEUMONIA associated with a Nursing Home

MARYLAND SEASONAL FLU STATUS:

Seasonal Influenza reporting occurs October through May. No cases of influenza were reported to DHMH during MMWR Week 42 (October 14 - 20, 2007).

***Please note:** Influenza data reported to DHMH through the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) is provisional and subject to further review.

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA UPDATE / AVIAN INFLUENZA-RELATED REPORTS

WHO Pandemic Influenza Phase: Phase 3/4: No or very little human-to-human transmission/Small clusters with limited human-to-human transmission, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans

US Pandemic Influenza Stage: Stage 0/1: New domestic animal outbreak in at-risk country/Suspected human outbreak overseas

*More information regarding WHO Pandemic Influenza Phase and US Pandemic Influenza Stage can be found at:
<http://bioterrorism.dhmh.state.md.us/flu.htm>

WHO update: As of October 17, 2007, the WHO-confirmed global total of human cases of H5N1 avian influenza virus infection stands at 331, of which 203 have been fatal. Thus, the case fatality rate for human H5N1 is about 61%.

AVIAN INFLUENZA, HUMAN (Indonesia): 14 Oct 2007, An Indonesian boy died from bird flu in the capital on Oct 13, bringing the country's death toll from the virus to 88, the Health Ministry said. The 12 year old junior high school student from Tangerang, on Jakarta's south western outskirts, died after being treated for 5 days at Persahabatan Hospital - a

designed bird-flu hospital in Jakarta - said Daswir Nurdin of the ministry's bird flu center. "He was reported to have had contact with dead chickens close to his school," Nurdin said, adding that the boy first developed breathing problems and a fever on Sep 30 and initially visited a local clinic. The boy was brought to Persahabatan on Oct 9, Nurdin said. "His death raised Indonesia's death toll of bird flu to 88 deaths out of 109 cases, he said. Indonesia has been hardest hit by the virus since it began ravaging poultry stocks across Asia in 2003. Its human death toll now accounts for almost half of the recorded 200 fatalities worldwide, according to the World Health Organization.

NATIONAL DISEASE REPORTS:

E. COLI O157, GROUND BEEF (Multi State): 16 Oct 2007, J & B Meats Corp. recalled 173,554 pounds of ground beef that may be contaminated with the potentially deadly E. coli O157:H7 bacteria, the fifth such recall by an American company in the past 3 weeks. The products subject to the latest recall include boxes of burgers with "Topps" and "Sam's Choice" labels, the USDA said in a statement issued on Oct 13. The meat was produced on Jun 12, 18, and 22, 2007 and distributed to retail outlets nationwide. Company officials didn't return calls seeking comment. The biggest of the recalls was by Topps Meat Co., which went out of business earlier this month after recalling 21.7 million pounds of ground beef. Topps, of Elizabeth, NJ, had been the owner of J & B Meats, which is based in Coal Valley, IL, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. J & B recalled the beef after investigators found a possible link to a reported illness. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

INTERNATIONAL DISEASE REPORTS:

SHIGELLOSIS (Russia): 14 Oct 2007, Russian chief sanitary physician, Gennady Onishchenko, said at a press conference in Kislovodsk on Oct 8, that the total number of the infected in the Lermontov and Kislovodsk cities is 503 people. "The peak of the outbreak was registered on Oct 4 when about 120 people in each of the cities became ill," Onishchenko said. The chief sanitary doctor confirmed that according to the epidemic investigation data and preliminary laboratory analyses, the infection source was products of the Vita dairy company of Zheleznovodsk. Onishchenko noted, "9 samples of the confiscated product have proven positive for dysentery, so the work of the company has been suspended and the court will soon make a decision on its closure." According to the newest reports from the regional office of the Rospotrebnadzor, 624 people, including 572 children younger than 14, contracted the infection as of Oct 7. A total of 396 people, including 356 children, have been taken to hospital. This is the 4th outbreak of intestinal infection on the Stavropol territory since July 2007. Physicians say the incubation period for the outbreak will be over by the middle of this week, but new cases are possible. About 150 children have been hospitalized with intestinal infection in Kislovodsk. Uiba told reporters that they had been diagnosed with dysentery caused by Shigella sonnei. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

CHOLERA (Somalia): 15 Oct 2007, The United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) has warned of an imminent risk of cholera in southern Somalia. Seven new cases have been confirmed so far in the capital, Mogadishu, as well as in Berdale and Burhakaba. WHO says the new cases represent an even more serious threat than the outbreak that occurred 3 months ago and which affected more than 37,000 people and led to over 1100 deaths. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has begun delivering cholera kits and oral re-hydration therapy supplies to the area. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that the flood alert was raised from moderate to high on the Shabelle and Juba rivers following significant rainfall in South Somalia and the Ethiopian highlands where the 2 rivers originate. An inter-agency mission to assess the situation and possible interventions are being planned. Meanwhile, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that, in a 2-way flow of displaced persons, nearly 31,000 people have fled ongoing insecurity, sporadic violence and looting in Mogadishu since the beginning of September 2007, while nearly 800 internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned to the Somali capital. (Water Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

CHOLERA (Angola): 15 Oct 2007, 34 cases of cholera, resulting in 10 deaths were reported over the last 10 days in Wako-Kungo region, Cela district, in the coastal Kwanza Sul province. According to the balance report of the municipal health division, made available to ANGOP on Oct 15, the cases were registered in the outskirts of Wako-Kungo city. The note also stated that local health officials are actively engaged in tracking down cholera cases in the region, conducting house to house distribution of calcium hypochlorite, sensitizing the communities on the dangers of the epidemic disease, as well as holding some upgrading courses to benefit technicians, chieftains and religious authorities, among others. (Water Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

FORMALDEHYDE CONTAMINATION, CANDY (Philippines): 16 Oct 2007, The Chinese government is deeply concerned by reports that some Filipino students have fallen ill after eating Chinese-made milk candies, the spokesman of the Ministry of Commerce said. A special team of food safety experts will be sent to the Philippines if necessary to assist in the investigation, the spokesman said. He declined to reveal the name of the candies. Some 23 schoolchildren fell ill on Oct 4 after eating milk candies imported from China and were sent to hospital in Cebu, the Philippines, according to local reports. They were all discharged a day later, reports said. Pending the results of the investigation into the incident, local stores have been asked to temporarily stop selling the candies. In response, the Chinese government directed its Cebu

consulate to immediately look into the matter and submit a report. Late last month, the Philippines banned the sale of imported Chinese food products at school canteens in response to reports that the goods contained cancer-causing formaldehyde. Among the products tested by the top food watchdog in the Philippines and found to contain formaldehyde were White Rabbit milk candies and Yong Kang Foods grape biscuits. Formaldehyde, a colorless, flammable gas, has been classified as a human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research and as a probable human carcinogen by the US Environmental Protection Agency. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

CHOLERA, DIARRHEA (Nigeria): 17 Oct 2007, About 7 people have died in Bauchi State owing to a gastroenteritis outbreak, while over 60 people are currently infected with the disease in the state. This was disclosed by the Secretary of Nigeria Red Cross Society Bauchi State Chapter, Alhaji Adamu Abubakar. He stated further that those infected with the deadly disease are receiving treatment in various health institutions in the state as a result. The Red Cross secretary attributed the outbreak to poor sanitary condition in the metropolis, adding that the various flood disasters experienced in the area in 2007, had also contributed to the outbreak. (Water Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

SALMONELLOSIS, SEROTYPE ENTERITIDIS, HOTEL LUNCH (European Union): 19 Oct 2007, On Aug 21, 2007, a hospital in Barcelona, Spain, informed local health authorities in Girona of the occurrence of an outbreak of gastrointestinal illness among 3 families who had eaten lunch at a hotel in Lloret de Mar on Aug 14. Only one of these 3 families was staying at the hotel. The lunch on Aug 14 at the hotel was the only meal they had shared. Samples for stool culture were collected from 6 of the 12 affected individuals in this outbreak and all tested positive for Salmonella. Local epidemiologists carried out a preliminary investigation by interviewing the 12 cases notified by the hospital in Barcelona on Aug 21. Information about clients having stayed at the hotel around Aug 14 was obtained from the hotel manager and from the health center that usually provides medical assistance to clients of the hotel. Affected tourists from 12 countries were detected. Most of these guests had returned to their countries by the time of the investigation. On Aug 27, a European alert was sent through the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS). On Aug 29, after a teleconference organized by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), all involved countries were included in the international investigation of this outbreak. Although results of the investigation were not conclusive regarding the source of contamination, they strongly suggest that a spaghetti dish was the contamination vehicle. Findings from the environmental inspection support this hypothesis. It is very likely that the spaghetti was kept at a temperature lower than usually recommended, as all dishes were left to cool until lunchtime in the cooking area and without proper protection. The spaghetti dish may have been contaminated either by the precooked eggs, directly by an infected food handler, or by cross-contamination. (Food Safety Threats are listed in Category B on the CDC list of Critical Biological Agents) *Non-suspect case

*Cases and outbreaks will be cited for suspect level with regards to suspicion of BT threat. Therefore, cases and outbreaks will be categorized as "Determined BT", "Suspect" or "Non-suspect".

OTHER RESOURCES AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

More information concerning Public Health and Emergency Preparedness can be found at the Office of Preparedness and Response website: <http://bioterrorism.dhnh.state.md.us/>

Updated Information on Current Salmonella Outbreak Associated with Frozen Pot Pies

CDC is collaborating with public health officials in multiple states across the United States and with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service to investigate an ongoing multi-state outbreak of *Salmonella* I 4,[5],12:i:- infections in humans. (<http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/4512eyeminus.html>)

Updated Information on Current Multi State Outbreak of E. coli O157 Infections Linked to Ground Beef

Several state health departments, CDC, and the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) are investigating a multi-state outbreak of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 infections. (<http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2007/october/100207.html>)

NOTE: This weekly review is a compilation of data from various surveillance systems, interpreted with a focus on a potential BT event. It is not meant to be inclusive of all epidemiology data available, nor is it meant to imply that every activity reported is a definitive BT event. International reports of outbreaks due to organisms on the CDC Critical Biological Agent list will also be reported. While not "secure", please handle this information in a professional manner. Please feel free to distribute within your organization, as you feel appropriate, to other professional staff involved in emergency preparedness and infection control.

Questions about the content of this review or if you have received this and do not wish to receive these weekly notices, please e-mail me. If you have information that is pertinent to this notification process, please send it to me to be included in the routine report.

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